

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 EB-07 /014 R

DRAFTED BY COM/BIC/OED/MEPD/TJASPER/LW

APPROVED BY EB/OCA/CM/AWALLACE

COM/BIC/OED/MEPD/JMSANDS

COM/BIC/OIM (INFO COPY)

AF/W/WRAMSAY (INFO)

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R 172332Z DEC 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

UNCLAS STATE 297485

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, MR

SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT: SNIM IRON AND STEEL MILL

REF: (A) STATE 272987; (B) NOUAKCHOTT 2266

1. ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS REPRESENTATIVES OF USS ENGINEERS AND CONSULTANTS (UEC) HAVE MET WITH SNIM'S PARTNER KUWAIT FOREIGN TRADING CONTRACTING AND INVESTMENT CO. (KFTCIC) TO OFFER ASSISTANCE IN STRUCTURING THE MAURITANIAN STEEL MILL. UEC OFFERED TO PREPARE A PROPOSAL DESIGNED TO EVALUATE THE SIZE OF THE MILL, TECHNOLOGIES TO BE EMPLOYED, SOURCES OF RAW MATERIALS, FINISHED PRODUCTS, BY-PRODUCTS, AND MARKETS FOR FINISHED AND BY-PRODUCTS. THEY HAVE RECEIVED VIRTUALLY NO FEEDBACK ON THEIR OFFER FROM EITHER SNIM OR KFTCIC.

2. SINCE THE INFORMATION REQUESTED BY DR. AKA IN REFTTEL B IS AT LEAST IN PART SIMILAR TO THE UEC PROPOSAL WE EXPECT SNIM BELIEVES THIS INFORMATION IS READILY AVAILABLE AT MINIMAL COST. UNFORTUNATELY IT IS NOT READILY AVAILABLE. FURTHERMORE IN ALL GOOD FAITH UEC IS UNWILLING TO PERFORM
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A CURSORY EVALUATION OF THESE VARIABLES SINCE THE

CONSLUSIONS ARE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT AND WOULD SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR CONSTRUCTING THE FACILITY.

3. UEC INDICATES THEY ARE PREPARED TO MAKE A PROPOSAL TO SNIM TO MAKE A PRELIMINARY EVALUATION FOR STRUCTURING

THE PROPOSED STEEL MILL. THIS ASSISTANCE WOULD COST APPROXIMATELY 25,000 DOLLARS. HOWEVER IT WOULD PROVIDE SNIM WITH A BASIS FOR CONSTRUCTING ITS FACILITY AND IS SOMETHING SNIM SHOULD BE PREPARED TO PAY FOR. (FYI. EMBASSY SHOULD NOTE THAT UEC'S OFFER IS FOR A PRELIMINARY STUDY NOT FOR A DETAILED FEASIBILITY STUDY.)

4. ACTION REQUESTED: WE RECOMMEND EMBASSY DISCUSS UEC'S OFFER WITH APPROPRIATE SNIM OFFICIALS. POST SHOULD EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS EVALUATION AS THE BASIS FOR CONSTRUCTING THE STEEL FACILITY. IF SNIM IS INTERESTED IN UEC'S PROPOSAL AND WOULD GIVE IT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION WE WILL ENCOURAGE UEC TO RESPOND. UEC IS PREPARED TO SEND SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE TO MAURITANIA TO DISCUSS THEIR PROPOSAL IF EMBASSY RECEIVES POSITIVE RESPONSE. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE297485
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: BIC/OED/MEPD/TJASPER/LW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750439-0826
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751234/aaaabdrq.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN COME
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 272987, 75 NOUAKCHOTT 2266
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 JUN 2003 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <30 JAN 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MAJOR PROJECT: SNIM IRON AND STEEL MILL
TAGS: BEXP, MR
To: NOUAKCHOTT
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006